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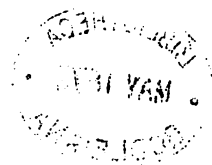
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"I BELIEVE"



THE APOSTLES & NICENE CREEDS



'I BELIEVE;'
OR,
THE APOSTLES' AND NICENE CREEDS
CONSIDERED IN MEDITATION,
AND
APPROPRIATED IN DEVOTION AND PRAISE.

BY
J. W. MORRIS, F.L.S.

With an Introduction
BY
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HATCHARDS, PICCADILLY.
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INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book needs no introduction, certainly none from another hand than its author's : but things not needed are sometimes desired ; and in this instance, a request from a quarter which has claims on my compliance, has also an attraction of its own, in offering me the pleasure of some slight association in a work which engages my sympathies.

The book is intended to illustrate and assist the use of the Creed in private meditation and devotion, and it is this general purpose which is the proper subject of a preface. Writing then, not as a sponsor who recommends, or as a critic who estimates the work of another, but as a contributor who takes a share in it, I am

thankful for the occasion of saying something on the various uses of the Creed, and particularly of this present use of it.

If a special Divine guidance is anywhere to be recognised in the life of the Church, it must be in this concentrated utterance of the faith which has the witness of its authority in its instinctive adoption, and universal and perpetual use by the whole of Christendom. We may note the tokens of this guidance, in its limitation to fundamentals, the selection and orderly sequence of its Articles, the firm hold in its central portion on historic fact, the grand range of its ideas, its condensation and distinctness, its gravity, brevity, simplicity. But the thing now to be observed is the great variety of uses for which these characteristics have fitted it in the life of the Christian Church, and in the experience of the Christian man.

Let any one consider with how many kinds of special intention he may rehearse the Creed, and consequently what varying shades of character it may assume. It may be used as an

expression of certainty, riveting and ratifying personal conviction; as a guarantee to the Church of participation in its faith given by a candidate for baptism; as the common voice of the congregation asserting its ground of union and bond of fellowship; as an authoritative record and publication to the world of the Articles of the Christian faith; as an unchanging protest against misbelief and heresy; as an act of worship and solemn confession before God; as a guide to meditation and framework for devout exercises; as a joyful recital of glorious truths in the spirit of a hymn of praise.

It is more particularly in the two last aspects that the use of the Creed is here advocated and presented. There is nothing in this which can even seem to be factitious. What indeed can be more natural and fit, if the Articles of a Christian's faith be not a mere string of opinions but a scheme of truths which by their very nature should enter into the recesses of his being, and form the groundwork of his habits of

thought? For it is evident that this their proper effect is both expressed and assisted by reviewing them, arraying them before the mind, dwelling upon them separately, connecting them in their orderly succession, uniting them by their mutual relations, drawing out what they imply, following out what they suggest, submitting the conscience to their appeals, and making them starting-points for communion with God and the ascension of heart and mind towards heaven.

Such spiritual exercises conducted in solitude, may, after all, be more conducive to profit than the 'addresses' and 'conferences' with which we are now so familiar, and by which there is some danger of their being supplanted. The entering into closets and shutting of doors may have become somewhat strange to the religious temper of our day; but if it be useful to hearken where there is a crowd, it is also useful to retire where one can be still; and if impression and contagion count for something in spiritual life, so also do recollection and meditation: and perhaps that which is done *by* us

will in the long run assert its own advantages over that which is done *to* us, as being more intimate, more permanent, and more certainly real. Books, therefore, which suppose such exercises, which are the product of them, and are meant to minister to them, are, so far, recommended by their general character and design, and they will be welcome to particular minds as suiting them first in the line which they take and then in their manner of treating it. Of the latter of these points the reader must be left to judge, but the line which is here taken is a proper subject of remark.

As a line of direction for meditation and devotion there is perhaps nothing comparable to the Creed.

The 'I believe,' which underlies every one of its words, places the mind at once in its true relation to the successive subjects of reflection. We are in the region of faith, as distinguished from sense, or demonstration, or speculation. We have done with argument, inquiry, and debate; and now with a firm footing and with

assured composure we rest on the ground of revelation, which is the word of God. In the same expression we speak each for himself, affirming an individual apprehension and personal appropriation of the truths recited ; while we also intend in the word 'believe' a moral force which is in its proper nature the motive power of life. The opening word has thus given the true point of view, and the right temper of mind for healthy and profitable meditation.

Then follow the subjects of such meditation in a connected series, and distinguished under the three divisions which the common printing of the Creed presents : First, the faith in God, the broad foundation truth of all religion, as it is confirmed and defined by revelation ; then the faith in the Son of God manifested for us, in the successive steps of that human history through which he redeemed the world ; then the faith in the Holy Ghost, and in the dispensation of the Spirit, which is the consequence of *redemption*, including first the life of the Church

in its outward and inward aspects, and then the life of its members, based on the forgiveness of sins, and rising into the life everlasting.

Here is a consecutive course of thought, conducting from the first principle of God and the universe through the historic facts of the Gospel of Christ to the results which are personal to ourselves: and the field of reflection thus marked out for us is as ample as it is distinct, for there is scarcely anything in Divine revelation which is not implicitly contained in these Articles, or naturally suggested by them.

Questions and debates may arise on every one of them, but questioning and debating are not the kind of exercise here in view; indeed they are antagonistic to it. Fundamental questions at least must be set at rest before meditation and devotion can proceed. Those which touch the base of the whole fabric of the faith, which must inevitably occur, and did, in fact, immediately arise, have their answers in the distinctive clauses of the Nicene, and, if more be needed, in those of the Athanasian Creed.

These statements are not gratuitous additions by which the Creed is burdened, but indispensable explications of its simpler language ; for, so long as men think as well as speak, they cannot repeat 'I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Ghost,' without considering *what* they believe concerning them, and on what grounds Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are united in one act and form of faith with the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth, and in what sense God is the Father, and Jesus Christ the Son, and the only Son, and with what meaning He is called 'our Lord.' A man who had no answer to these questions, in taking the Creed for a guide in meditation and prayer, would find himself arrested at once ; but, as it is, his answer is made ready and shaped for use, in the reverential precision of those statements which the necessity of the case evoked, and which go down through the ages as the deliberate voice of the Catholic Church. Therefore in a book like this, if it is to fulfil its

purpose, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds must be read as one, the briefer statement deriving clearness and firmness from the larger statement behind it.

I will only further observe, that the more clear the view and the more firm the hold upon the truths affirmed, so much the more will the recital of the Creed rise to the tone and spirit of a hymn of praise. To some minds it may seem that there is no natural kindred between Creed and song, and that the genius of the one and of the other are far as the poles asunder. So it is with those who think and speak of Articles of faith as hard, dry formulas, which impair the freedom and cramp the movements of the mind by the imposition of a prescriptive bondage. But to those who have received the truths themselves into their hearts, and know the life and glory that are in them, very different feelings will attend the utterance of words which record them. The dignity and compass of the ideas which so rapidly succeed each other, the grand scheme of eternal life which they build

up and in which they cohere, their vital relation with all the strongest affections and deepest experiences of the soul, the confidence and strength which are felt in the utterance of assured certainty, the consciousness of the vast communion to which the confession unites us, and the sense of relations with Heaven which attends the possession of these truths—all this creates an expansion and elevation of mind which are constituents of the highest poetic spirit, and in virtue of which the Creed is itself an anthem. With more or less of this lofty and joyful consciousness every true worshipper has from time to time rehearsed the well-known words. Under the same feelings the grand rhythm of the Athanasian Confession was toned for chanting, and was known, not as the Creed, but as the *Hymnus quicumque Vult*. All the best hymns we have are expansions of some Article of the Creed, and the noblest of all voices of praise, *Te Deum laudamus*, testifies through all ages that in Christ Jesus, creed and hymn and prayer are one.

These few remarks are here offered as preliminary to the book to which I am permitted to attach them, because they are intended to recommend a certain view and use of the Creed, of which the book is, in its way, an instance—an instance of which I will only say that, as proceeding from one who has long laboured in the cause of general education, it becomes a fresh testimony that that cause is best served under the influence of loyalty to the Word of God, and of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

T. D. B.

July 23, 1878.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell ; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; The holy Catholic Church ; The Communion of Saints ; The forgiveness of sins ; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible :

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father ; By whom all things were made, Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead : Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Keep to the Bible and the Apostles' Creed,
and let Divines, if they will, dispute about the
rest.'—DEAN COLET.

'There are who count it a bondage to fix a
Belief.'—BACON.

'I BELIEVE.'



**'I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER
ALMIGHTY'
'IN ONE GOD.'—NICENE.**

'He that cometh to God must believe that He is.'

THEOLOGICALLY to assent to this is as easy as to deny it, for not to believe in the existence of God is credulity. As Bacon well puts it, 'I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind.' Vitally to confirm this confession by the assent and consent of heart, soul, and spirit, is another matter. 'I believe that there is a God:' this is the acceptance by the mind to an intellectual

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proposition. 'I believe that *He is*:' this realises a fact, and comes closer home than the declaration of a truth. 'I believe *in* God:' this appropriates both fact and truth to my own proper comfort, for 'this God is our God for ever and ever.'

This faith in God is the highest attainment possible to man. It was counted to Abraham for righteousness; and it is to every child of Adam at once the condition and the witness of eternal life. It brings the worlds together, the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal, the material and the spiritual. A mortal man believing truly in God, in God whom he cannot see, and cannot by searching find, belongs already to a better world than this. In Him we live and move and have our being; but though He is not far from every one of us, how hard it is to live in the consciousness of His presence, to walk with Him in daily life. Yet 'I believe in God' asks nothing less from our sincerity, and imposes nothing less upon our loyalty and love.

The Father Almighty. Since 'of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things,' this represents Him essentially,—the great First Cause, 'one God and Father of all,'—before it unites Him to us in that bond which is ours by adoption and grace, and by which we, the children of men, may call Him, Abba, Father! First of the Trinity, yet, as the Nicene inserts and insists, *one* God throughout the Trinity, throughout Eternity, throughout Space,—'For to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we by Him.' The key-note of the universe is here. The harmony broken at the fall is restored in redemption. The song of the herald angels swells in unison with that which the morning stars sang together when the foundations of the earth were laid, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. 'Our Father which art in heaven,' is 'the Father Almighty' of all eternity. Let us glorify Him with our body and our spirit, which are His.

DEVOTION.

Almighty God, Father of all, and through Thy Son our Saviour, *my* Father reconciled and gracious,—grant me such living and energizing faith, as may enable me fully to lay hold of this truth of Thy Almightyness and Thy eternal sovereignty, so to reach it with my understanding and grasp it with faith, that I may prove its strength and comfort in every approach to Thy throne, which is the throne of the universe; in every duty, and in every difficulty, which Thou allottest for my probation; and in every delight and happiness which Thou suppliest to Thy children. Grant me this faith, O heavenly Father, and vouchsafe me this faith's fruition, here and hereafter, for my Saviour's sake. Amen.

I BELIEVE IN GOD.

Believe in God ! Ten thousand stars proclaim
Their mighty Maker. Him they cannot name.
Believe in God ! Each infant's helpless cry
Announcing life, says 'God,' but knows not
why.

Believe in God ! My soul within me yearns
To find its author, and still heavenward turns ;
I search the sky, the earth,—I look within,—
And meet the mysteries of death and sin.

In vain I search, I cannot find Thee out ;
Mysterious meets mysterious, all is doubt.
Power, weakness,—joy and misery I see ;
Perplexed by all, this most, that I should be.

I read Thy Word, interpreting Thy plan,
The revelation of Thyself to man ;
I learn Thy name, and Abba, Father, cry,
I know now why I live, and why I die.

My being proves me born but to receive,
Thy Word shows nobler purpose—to believe !
Creation shows me only born to die,
Thy Word reveals my life with Thee on high.

Belief is satisfaction to the soul ;
Parts cannot satisfy,—we need the whole.
Man needs belief in God,—belief is life,
Life to the soul in being's mortal strife.

' Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief !'
Reveal Thyself, give love its sweet relief ;
Make all my nature cleave henceforth to Thee,
And happiest in Thy presence let me be.

**'MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.'
'AND OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND
INVISIBLE.'—NICENE.**

YET of the Son, the Logos, it is written—'By (or through) Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made.' And 'Let *us* make man in our own image.' The Unity in Trinity is here beheld in action, and we can hardly separate between the *immediate* creation and the *original* fiat. 'By whom also *He* made the worlds.' To will and to do are one. 'He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.'

The addition in the Nicene—'and of all things visible and invisible'—carries the thought further on, and the extension of belief is all-important. 'Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so

that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.' The unseen Universe is upon us in all its soul-stirring solemnity of space and silence, in its inconceivable attribute of eternity. 'The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' Compared with these, the orbéd magnificence of the Heavens, and all the teeming loveliness of Earth, are but the 'lowest works ;'

'Yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.'

This Nicene addition tasks us to follow in the direction which it indicates. The senses give no guidance. Like Noah's dove, our swiftest winged thoughts come back to their ark, and rest in the material, the seen, the felt, at least, in the understood ; there is no foothold beyond, we can realise nothing. Those thrones unseen, those principalities and powers invisible, those quickening energies of life, surpass the limits of finite conception as completely as they elude the perceptions of sense.

Yet faith maintains her grasp, and wondering whispers still in her deep repose of calm and confidence: 'Without Him was not *anything* made that was made:' 'In Him *we* live, and move, and have our being.'

DEVOTION.

O thou Creator of all things, by whom all things exist, and for whose pleasure they are, and were created, suffer me, Thy creature, to glorify Thy power and to adore Thy wisdom; teach me to see Thee in Thy works, and trace Thee in their government. Help me, O God, to consider Thy visible creation with the best powers of my mind, and enable me by Thy Holy Spirit to commune with the things which are spiritual and eternal. I belong to both Thy worlds: grant me in mercy what I need for each. Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: I will thank Thee for my being:

but, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me, that I may praise Thee and magnify Thee aright, even for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

'ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.'

O praise the Lord and magnify
The honour of His Name !
Join heaven and earth to glorify
The hand from which ye came !

The things we see are but a part
Of all that God hath made ;
'Through faith we understand' the art
That earth's foundations laid.

The things unseen surround us still,
Real as the world of sense ;
Their motions wide creation fill,
Ruled by omnipotence.

This being shortly shall dilate,
And change creation's sphere ;
The unseen worlds He did create,
And I shall soon be there.

' By faith we understand.' Amen !
Lord, let this faith be mine,
That I may walk thereby till then,
When I am wholly Thine.

**AND IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON,
OUR LORD.'**

BELIEVING this and affirming this belief, I believe and affirm four things. (1.) I believe that Jesus of Nazareth, named by the angel of the Lord, is, as that name declares, the Saviour of the World, 'for He shall save His people from their sins.' (2.) I believe with Martha that He is 'the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.' The Christ of prophecy and of promise, anointed 'with the Holy Ghost and with power.' (3.) I believe in the Divine Sonship of Him, who 'being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.' 'Before Abraham was I AM.' And

(4.) recognising His Lordship and welcoming His Sovereignty, I say, in the words of Thomas, with adoration and awe, 'My Lord and my God.'*

Thus far the Apostles' Creed ; but the Nicene carries us further, and confronts us with mysteries transcending our apprehension : '*The only begotten Son of God ; begotten of His Father before all worlds ; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God ; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father.*'

Into the mystery of this Divine Sonship and begetting 'before all worlds,' human thought cannot penetrate ; but though the thing proposed for my assent is in its nature beyond my intelligence, I must understand the extent and value of the proposition before I can fitly say that I believe it. To shrink from this, or to fall short of this, is to make 'of a sublime truth, a weak, useless, vain discourse.' Human language scarcely escapes self-contradiction here, and the intrusion of the limitations of sense into the

* 'Lord of me, and God of me.'

dominion of spirit, perplexes the understanding. 'Being of one substance with the Father.' Distinction and separation attach inevitably to our every idea of perfect existence; but God is a Spirit, and these finite ideas, the projection of our finite nature, do not apply, and must with diligence be discarded from the contemplation which is proposed. One underlying essence (substance) capable of existence, and assuredly existing, in Unity as in Trinity, and in Trinity as in Unity, I believe to have been His from everlasting. *How* the self-existing, self-sufficing, unconditioned, ONE, the Almighty Father, could or did communicate the Divine essence to the Eternal Word, without confusion of persons, I am not called upon to understand. I *am* called upon to believe that 'it pleased the Father that in Him,' 'the Son of His love,' 'should all fulness dwell;' that 'in the beginning, or ever the earth was, the Word was God ;' that He, who in the voice as of a trumpet declared in the Apocalyptic Vision, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,' is one with Him

who, by the mouth of Isaiah, declared, 'I am the first and I am the last, and beside Me there is no God;' and that thus, because He is *from* the Father, the Father of Lights with whom is no variableness, He is God *of* God, Light *of* Light, very God *of* very God. All this I can and would reverently believe and affirm; and thus believing, when I muse upon the wonder of wonders, 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,' my faith is informed with deeper adoration, and my soul moved to its depths with amazement at the disclosure of Love divine.

And I recognise His dominion. 'He is Lord of all.' 'All the angels of God worship Him.' But by how much deeper an obligation do we call this Lord of all '*our* Lord,' seeing that He is become Head of our race by incarnation, and, furthermore, that in this human nature He 'both died and rose and revived that He might be the Lord both of the dead and living,' having humbled 'Himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; wherefore

God hath also highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'

And, calling Him Lord, I would do His will and truly be His servant. Then, and not till then, will this my creed avail me, when, 'obeying from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to me, I may have fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.'

DEVOTION.

My Saviour and my Lord, I believe in Thy salvation; but how shall I, with this spirit of infirmity, approach Thee with fit thanksgiving, or worthily magnify Thy glorious Name? I can but repeat Thy attributes and let Thine own

Name praise Thee. Son of God, I worship Thy Divine Majesty ! My Lord and my God, I would be Thy servant. O do Thou in very deed be the Lord of me and the God of me ! In all the actions of my life, and in all the motives of my conduct, graciously command and guide me, as one of Thy redeemed children ; and let me not, even in desire, wander from Thy way, or deny Thy service.

Help me, O gracious Spirit, to bind these great and precious verities of my salvation close unto my heart ; and as Thou, O Lord, art rich unto all that call upon Thee, supply my constant need out of Thy fulness,—my need of faith, that I may believe as I should believe ; and my need of daily grace, that my belief may in all things be fruitful to Thy glory.

For Thine own Name's sake hear me and accept me then, O my Saviour, and be my Mediator with the Father. Amen.

JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD.

'His only Son !' And can it be
He gave Him up—to die—for me ?
O matchless love, 'tis love divine ;
No other love, my God, like Thine !

Nor this the whole—He died for *man*,
No less the glorious Gospel plan ;
Beyond Creation's utmost scope,
The Christian's faith, the Christian's hope.

For man, in all his self and sin,
Back to Himself each soul to win.
Do I believe in love so great ?
Can I such love appropriate ?

For man, his creature gone astray,
Wide of His mercy and His way,
Forgetful of His love and law :
'Not one' good man the Father saw.

What pity moved our God, that He
Should thus to sinners gracious be !
The everlasting throne on high
The Saviour left, and left—to die.

Awake ! my soul, and sound His praise,
Who pardons all thy sin-spent days,
Who gives thee life beyond the grave,
Who died, who rose, who lives to save.

While here I draw this passing breath,
In Christ I'll know no fear of death.
Death's but my summons to the skies ;
Buried in Him, through Him I'll rise.

Accept, my Saviour, all I'd give,
And let me in Thy service live.
Accept my praise, though poor it be ;
Poor man was not too poor for Thee.

'WHICH WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED. WHO FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND WAS INCARNATE BY THE HOLY GHOST OF THE VIRGIN MARY, AND WAS MADE MAN, AND WAS CRUCIFIED ALSO FOR US UNDER PONTIUS PILATE. HE SUFFERED AND WAS BURIED.—NICENE.

THE '*for us men*' of the Nicene, is a golden link of the chain which reaches from heaven to earth, and is unspeakably precious. Nor is the addition, '*for our salvation,*' dispensable. If the first reminds us of the Divine compassion and condescension, the second assures us of the *deliverance* purposed in the Advent, and ac-

complished in the Passion, of our Redeemer. 'For *us* men.' There is a tenderness here that touches the heart, and the blessed truth comes home:—

' My Saviour, Thou didst shed
Thy precious blood for *me*.'

' *Conceived by the Holy Ghost.*' ' *Born of the Virgin Mary.*' 'That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.' ' *Thou* shalt conceive and bear a Son.' What an Epiphany is this! 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.' The Virgin, espoused of Joseph, was His mother, by the power of the Lord and giver of Life; and thus He who as the Eternal Son was begotten, not made, was as the Son of Mary, 'made man, man of the substance of his mother, born in the world.'

And here we may well reflect, that as the power of death and the dominion of the grave are broken by the victory of our risen Redeemer, so is the birth of every man hallowed and glorified, and our humanity for ever elevated, by this condescension to its necessity, and ac-

ceptance of its infirmity, by our Incarnate God. Even from the cradle to the grave a stamp of honour is set upon our mortal bodies, and a seal of covenant with Him who became flesh and dwelt amongst us. But the significance stays not here. Without His life-giving power, even the Holy Ghost's, our nature is as incapable of the Divine life as was the Virgin Mary of the maternity of the Babe of Bethlehem. Thus, then, that Holy Ghost, who, overshadowing the Virgin, gave her power to conceive and bear the blessed Babe, so bringing heaven to earth, He also, and He alone, forms within us that life divine which lifts our souls to heaven and makes us the heirs of immortality—'heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.'* And further yet, even as the Holy Child was made of the substance of His mother, though conceived by the

* 'Despair not : that which once was born of Mary, daily also is born in us.'—*St. Jerome.*

'By the same Spirit is the remission of sins in us, by which Spirit He was conceived who had no sin.'—*St Augustine.*

Holy Ghost, so must we look and pray for that energising influence by which the tendencies of our nature, the thoughts of our hearts, and the desires and motives of our souls, may be so regenerated that, though *of* us, they may yet be *from* Him, that so 'Christ, the hope of glory, may be formed in us,' and we 'have fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.'

'Suffered, crucified, dead, buried.' What an epitome of humiliations! what a record of love! what a glorifying of suffering! 'He suffered.' What He suffered we a little know. How He suffered we can never tell. He 'suffered under Pontius Pilate.' Herewith we enter the domain of secular history, and realise the relation of transactions which darkened the heavens and shook the earth, to the common human record. And this has its value. In the midst of truths transcending human testimony we find a foothold of historic fact; and the stupendous event which is a theme for eternity, is appreciated as an actual occurrence in the annals of time. In the blaze of celestial glories

the eye of faith may be dazzled, but here we stand amidst the multitude, in the press of the crowd that has thronged out of Jerusalem, and see Him—even Jesus of Nazareth, 'King of the Jews'—crucified among them.

The complete submission of the Saviour to every condition of his humiliation comes home to us in this. We know that He laid down His life, for He had power to lay it down and power to take it again; but it is not power which moves us here, but meekness. He suffers under Pontius Pilate, the representative of the Power which has conquered His people; He suffers an unjust sentence and a shameful death; He bows His thorn-crowned head with malefactors on either hand; He drinks the cup of human sorrow to the dregs. If the darkened heavens and shuddering earth moved the Centurion to exclaim, 'Truly this man was the Son of God,' so does every detail of submission and suffering remind us of how completely he took upon Him our nature, and verily suffered in our stead. The Centurion said truly, He was

'the Son of God.' Pontius Pilate has written what he has written ineffaceably for ever. He *was* 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews,' but standing before that cross we can but exclaim with the Baptist, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.'

What comfortings and assurances for time and for eternity rest upon these sufferings, and with what exhortations to personal holiness are they not charged. 'Who His own self bare our sins in His own Body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed.'

'Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.'

DEVOTION.

O Thou Saviour of men, Thou who didst suffer and die for man, who didst suffer and die for me, blessed for ever be Thy most

holy name for the salvation which Thou hast purchased with Thy most precious blood, for all the love of Thy life below, and all the grace of Thine intercession above. Vouchsafe unto me in infinite mercy that I may so order my life, and be so aided thereto by Thy Holy Spirit, that I may increasingly hate sin and escape from its dominion. Let me not, O my Saviour, through the infirmity of my nature, or the rebellion of my affections, quench the Spirit, or be slow to heed His quickening motions; but grant me a growing assurance of Thy favour, which is life, and of Thy lovingkindness which is better than life, that I, being dead to sin, may, indeed, live unto righteousness, to the glory of Thy name. Amen.

CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED.

Awake, my soul, and see
Christ on the shameful tree!
He bows His suffering head;
The 'Son of Man' is dead!

Creation shudders, and the daylight flies,
While angel wonder trembles through the
skies.

He's borne to Joseph's grave,
His life He would not save ;
The massive stone is rolled,
Yet Him no tomb shall hold.

The grave-clothes wrap the Virgin's Son,
The grave is conquered and the victory won !

My soul, with shame confess,
To succour thy distress,
To wash thy sins away,
To change thy night to day,
Thy Saviour bore the suffering and the shame.
Rouse all thy powers and magnify His name !

My soul rejoice and sing !
He did salvation bring ;
He died that thou might'st live,
He suffered to forgive.
His blood has paid thy debt and set thee free.
Rejoice in Christ, the Christ of Calvary !

'HE DESCENDED INTO HELL.'

NOT in the Nicene, and first appearing in the Aquileian Creed, four centuries after Christ, these deeply solemn and most suggestive words, resting mainly upon incidental utterances of Scripture, have been, and are, liable to a latitude of interpretation which does not attach to doctrines distinctly delivered by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The significant silence of Scripture as to the condition and place of departed souls, is maintained in the narrative of His absence from the body who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures,' and 'was buried' and 'rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.' What we are not told concerning Lazarus, neither are we told concerning Him who raised up Lazarus from the dead.

Tremblingly and timidly does the thought of man pursue the path of those who have departed this present life, into the awful shadows that enfold the inter-vital state. The revelation is partial; it is enough for comfort, but it does not satisfy curiosity. In all that is necessary to the first, there is evidence for faith; in what concerns the second, we cannot escape the conflict of opinion. Where all is dark around, each ray of light is precious, and this much we do learn, and rejoice to believe, that even as the gloom of the grave is brightened,—for He has shared the sepulchre with whom we shall yet, if we ‘overcome,’ share a throne,—so surely did He enter, in those three days of sublime silence and suspense, into that state which each child of Adam must pass into and therein abide until the Resurrection.

Nor have we to think of this ‘still garden of the souls’ as only once brightened by His presence, however specially and significantly true this may be, for ‘absent from the body, present with the Lord’ assures us, that there also

He still suffices to the spiritual need of every waiting soul, waiting for that final glory and that clear presence which will be fulness of joy.

Not a link is wanting in the golden chain. The submission and suffering of the Saviour include every experience, and as the darkness of the tomb is illumined by His passage through its portals, so does His descent into this 'Hades,' this 'Hell,' endow with its comfort, and enrich with its sympathetic presence that Rest, which those who sleep in Jesus blissfully prolong—waiting for the redemption of the body.

DEVOTION.

My Lord and my Life, how shall I thank Thee, how shall I love Thee, as I remember that for my sake Thou hast submitted Thyself *to all things* that I must know and suffer.

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Grant me, O my God, Thy Holy Spirit, that I may prepare for my great change, and await it without fear. Enable me to contemplate the time when Thou givest Thy beloved sleep, with a grateful sense that Thou didst not only pass the portals of the grave, but enter into the resting-place of those whose redemption Thou hadst even then accomplished upon the cross. Help me, O Holy Spirit, to all the comfort and confidence of this assurance. Help me to remember that living and dying—nay more, that alive and dead—I am the Lord's, that nothing can separate me from the love of God.

Take then, O Lord my God, my life under Thy keeping now, and may I yield this mortal breath, when Thou sendest me Thy summons, in sure and certain hope of Thy presence as the blessedness of *all* that lies beyond, in the happy rest and in the glorious resurrection.

Help me to repose in the comfort of all that Thou hast revealed, and to await with patience that disclosure of Thy love which shall come in the hereafter, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

HE DESCENDED INTO HELL.

From all our lot He nothing shrank,
The cup His Father gave He drank :
The grave, and all the dark 'between,'
He stooped to share,—the dread unseen.

We leave our loved ones at the grave,
Give back to God the life He gave,
We ask, but answer is there none,
'How fares it with the absent one ?'

'Absent,' but 'present with the Lord !'
What comfort's folded in the word !
With Him, whate'er that 'present' be,
Can only be felicity.

They sleep in Jesus—all is well ;
But what that sleep no voice can tell.
Is it a sleep of folded rest, -
Or do they know that they are blest ?

Our Saviour shared our darkest hour,
We cannot pass beyond His power,
He, too, descended into Hell :
Our Jesus hath done all things well !

**'THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM
THE DEAD.'**

**'HE ROSE AGAIN ACCORDING TO THE
SCRIPTURES.'**—NICENE.

THE Nicene addition, directing us to the recognition not only of the fact of the Resurrection, but to the fulfilment of prophecy in that fact, is full of value. The disciples realising this, 'believed the Scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said ;' and Peter's Pentecostal sermon recognising the fulfilment of David's words, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,' as spoken by the Spirit of David's greater Son, whose resurrection and ascension were henceforth the pledges and assurances of salvation to dying men, adds, with historical emphasis, 'whereof we all are witnesses.'

Of all the declarations of the Creed this is the

one upon which the practical value of all credence in the others must depend, for 'if Christ be not raised from the dead, our faith is vain.'

He was raised, and yet He rose. 'This Jesus hath God raised up.' 'Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.' Yet is it likewise declared by Him who said to Martha, ere He raised Lazarus from the dead, 'I am the resurrection and the life,'—'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,' 'but,' adds the Apostle, 'He spake of the temple of his body.' Thus is He 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.' These distinct expressions serve but to emphasize the unity of action, 'For, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.'

And this was a true resurrection 'from the *dead*.' The body had not seen corruption, but the union of soul and body had indeed been utterly dissolved. The temple of His body lay

tenantless in Joseph's sepulchre, guarded by soldiers without, and watched by angels within, until the third day. Then the dominion of Death was broken, when He who for our sakes and in our stead had been obedient thereto, triumphed over it, and led its captivity captive. 'He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' 'Death hath no more dominion over him.'

'The third day.' The Resurrection, like the Crucifixion, is a fact of history confirmed by evidence, as well as a truth of God complete with comfort to dying men. And the fulness of evidence is commensurate with the importance of the fact itself. Types and prophecies were to be fulfilled even to the letter, and many are the witnesses to attest that no jot or tittle of that fulfilment is wanting. Not only did the Apostles 'with great power' give 'witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus' and those 'five hundred brethren at once to whom He appeared,' but the soldiers also, the sentinels of the sepulchre, 'came into the city and showed

unto the chief priests all the things that were done.'

The importance which is evidently attached in Scripture to these 'three days' arrests attention and demands reflection. From the days of Jonah to the declaration of our Lord Himself at the commencement of His ministry,—'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,'—a particular, seemingly insignificant, is linked with the prediction of the event which was to reverse our ruin and redeem our race. What the condescension of God has thus submitted, so to speak, to the verification of human evidence, we do well to associate in our 'Belief' with the priceless truths which the fact thus verified underlies and sustains. The 'Crucified under Pontius Pilate' rose 'upon the third day' according to the Scriptures, and the exact fulfilment which we can thus establish by human testimony is a ground of that faith which reposes on other evidence, and a higher declaration for its assurance of the supreme and eternal import of the fact established. 'If we

believe the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.' 'Because He lives, we shall live also.'

Well may the Apostle enjoin us, '*Remember* that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead.' We are 'the sons of the resurrection,' 'begotten unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled.' To such a meditation what emotions of gratitude and praise, what happiness of hope, what resolutions of dedicated life and service, must belong !

Herein is the high argument of the Christian Sabbath. If to the holy keeping of the older Sabbath this to the Jew was the dearest incentive and the chiefest reason, '*Remember* that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm, therefore the Lord thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath day,' by how much greater reasons are we bound, by

how much deeper sense of deliverance are we stirred, who are delivered from death itself, and redeemed by the blood of Christ! Creation's work accomplished has the anthem of our praise, but the song of our deliverance is sweeter still as we remember that 'He rose again from the dead,' and our 'life is hid with Christ in God.'

DEVOTION.

O Thou, in whose hands are the power of death and of life, grant me to know the power of my Saviour's resurrection. I can a little realise Death, and its power I know. My flesh shrinks at its approach. Grant me to know and realise the power of Christ's victory over the grave, that the lively hope of deliverance from Death's dominion may animate my soul, and take away my fear.

I feel, O Lord my God, that by no effort of my mind, no exercise of my will, can I reach

this comfort. I can put the thought from me, but this I would not do. I cannot by myself, and of myself, divest Death of its dread and terror. The spirit is hardly willing, and the flesh is altogether weak ; but when my flesh and my heart faileth, do Thou be the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. If I could take this comfort into my life I know that it would ennoble its purposes, strengthen its resolves, and purify its affections. Help me to remember it, to keep it in remembrance, to live in the light of the resurrection morning, and so dispel the darkness that gathers round the pathway to the tomb.

And suffer me, O my Saviour, humbly, but from a full heart fervently, to thank Thee for the deliverance which Thou hast wrought, and to thank Thee with my life, the life which Thou hast redeemed. O my Saviour, Thou who didst awaken Lazarus out of sleep, wilt thou not awaken me also? Thy promise is sure, and my safety is in Thee. May I be able when my time of sleeping comes, be it slow or be it sudden, to

close my eyes in peace, resting upon the power of Thy resurrection, and so sleep in Jesus. Make these things plain to my weak faith, and powerful over my weak nature, by Thy all-sufficient grace, and for Thy mercy's sake, O my Saviour. Amen.

'HE ROSE AGAIN.'

O wondrous tale to mortal ears,
O welcome calm to human fears !
 The victory's won,
 Death's worst is done,
' Jesus Christ is risen to-day,'
The sting of death is borne away.

The groves of Eden, sad with sin,
When Death's dark shadow entered in,
 The promise heard ;
 But long deferred,
Patriarch and Prophet yearned to see
The day of their deliverance be.

In fulness of the time He came,
He bore our sins, He bore our shame,
 He took our doom,
 Endured the tomb,
He rose, and bruised the serpent's head,
'Captivity is captive led.'

The man, Christ Jesus, conquers death !
Secure man yields his parting breath,
 Death's but repose
 Since Jesus rose,
The Resurrection shines through Nature's
 gloom,
Heaven's gate stands open, and unclosed
 the tomb.

**HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, AND
SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF
GOD THE FATHER.'**

AGAIN the necessities and feebleness of language ask large allowance. The Ascension as a visible act was witnessed by men, and witnessed to by Angels; but the cloud which received Him 'out of their sight,' neither can our eyes penetrate. Where God is, in His revealed glory, there is Heaven, and there our creed bids us realise our ascended Saviour, in the fulness of His resumed majesty, sitting at the right hand of the Father. But what does this sitting at the right hand signify, and upon what does my faith repose when I accept and affirm this declaration of my Saviour's glory and my Father's love?

In the thoughtful utterance of these majestic

words we consider not only the Son of God resuming his sovereignty and awaiting, on His own and His Father's throne, that day when His enemies shall be made His footstool, and the fruition of all things temporal shall be gathered in, and the last enemy, even Death, shall be destroyed,—the thought of GOD, the eternal Father, His wondrous love and matchless mercy, fills the soul with gratitude, and it is the song of our great deliverance which rises with rapture to our lips as we magnify and extol the glorified Redeemer enthroned at the right hand of our covenant God. For this, 'the right hand of God' is the expression of His power, and here the mercy and the might are one. Are we tempted ever to doubt of the Divine forgiveness? We are reminded by the Psalmist: 'This is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.' This 'saving strength of His right hand' is the comfort and stay of the Old Testament saints: how much more now may it be ours? At that right hand which spanned the

heavens, and by which the Lord sware to His covenant with men, the Redeemer sits; and thus the might of God, His will, His readiness to save, are represented to us as knit together by redeeming love. The unity of the Trinity in might as in mercy, in mercy as in might, is *for* us. Should not our hearts rejoice when we remember the years of the right hand of the Most High, and devoutly invoke that saving strength which, since He is ascended to His Father and to our Father, reveals the throne of the universe as the mercy seat of God.

DEVOTION.

O Thou ascended Saviour, help me to lift up my eyes to Thy mercy seat, to glorify Thy majesty with mind and heart, and to trust in Thy salvation, to my soul's health and comfort. My Father and my God, enable me by Thy Holy Spirit to realise Thy readiness to bless Thy erring but repentant children; reveal to me the saving strength of Thy right

hand, in the assurance of my safety in my Saviour. Thy mercy and Thy love are themes for eternity, and for the sinless song of Heaven, but suffer me—daily as is my trespass, and constant though my sin—humbly to draw near to Thy footstool, there to offer the tribute of my imperfect praise, as I remember that Jesus is gone up on high, having led captivity captive, and that there is now no condemnation to those whom He has redeemed.

Enlarge, I pray Thee, my understanding of Thy purposes of mercy, and give me a worthier faith in Thy fatherly providence, that so I may understand how the course of this world is governed by Thy will and guided by Thy love; and that all things work together for good for them that love Thee. Complete in us what Thou hast accomplished for us, and send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

‘ AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.’

At Thy right hand, O God, most high,
Sits Christ the King !
He left it once, He came to die,
And rescue bring,
From Satan’s thrall our ruined race to save,
Death’s dark dominion end, and spoil the grave.

Ascended Saviour, to Thy throne,
Where seraphs throng,
Where in the blaze of light Thy glory’s shown,
I’d raise my song.
O Holy Ghost, inspire with joy divine
The praise I offer, so not wholly mine.

At God’s right hand sits love enthroned,
For Christ is there ;
He for our fatal guilt has once atoned,
Our sins He bare.
The sceptre of the universe is love,
Our Saviour sits at God’s right hand above !

Mercy and truth on high are met,
Atonement's made ;
The day approaches, and 'twill hasten yet,
For God hath said,
Truth from the earth shall spring and righteous
peace,
Christ shall be King indeed, and sin and sorrow
cease.

Draw me, O Lord my God, that I
May come to Thee ;
Thy 'saving strength' I'd glorify
And suppliant be,
That in Thy kingdom I may find a place,
And seeing darkly now, may soon see face to
face.

**'FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO
JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD.'
'AND HE SHALL COME AGAIN WITH
GLORY TO JUDGE BOTH THE QUICK
AND THE DEAD. WHOSE KINGDOM
SHALL HAVE NO END.'—NICENE.**

'From thence,' even from that right hand of God, where now He sits 'expecting till His enemies be made His footstool,' He shall come, and every eye shall see Him. 'From thence,' with all the sovereign majesty of the throne, to execute judgment ; but 'from thence,' with all the plenitude of infinite mercy, to gather His redeemed unto Himself for ever. If we have found Him on His mercy-seat, we shall not fear to behold Him on His judgment throne.

In that supreme and awful moment, in that

dread gathering and meeting together of the quick and dead, what a conflict of emotions, what a survey of life, and realising of life's final issues, will surge through human souls; but every eye shall see *Him*, and this will be all in all.

'*With glory,*' too. How great a change must pass upon us before we can look upon that glory as glory. Dazzling effulgence, and intolerable blaze of celestial splendour, we can anticipate; but eyes dark from the grave shall behold Him and not quail, and the quick shall see it and not shrink—save those, unhappy, who shall call on the mountains and the rocks to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. And that glory we are not only to behold, but—can our faith, indeed, embrace the assurance?—thenceforth we are to share it, too. 'Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory.' 'And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be

one, even as we are one.' In view of pledges such as these, and exaltations of bliss and being so far beyond our utmost reach of thought, we had need pray, 'Lord, increase our faith.' What preparation of heart, what elevation of soul, what perfecting of our union with Christ now, are pressed upon our thought, and demanded of our life, when *thus* we think of His coming in glory.

'The Judge of mankind doth appear
On clouds of glory seated.
Prepare, my soul, to meet Him !'

Yet, for saved and unsaved, it is still a judgment throne. 'Every one of us shall give account of himself to God;' 'for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, *whether it be good or bad.*'

Even by the revelations of glory we may not be 'exalted above measure.' At the thought of 'what we have done,' and how even our best

deeds done in the body must appear before Him who then shall be our Judge, hope almost dies within us, and we tremble lest we too must in that day turn from the 'glory' to the 'mountains,' and 'the wrath of the Lamb is terrible.' Yet it is written, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' and 'He is faithful that promised.' That attribute reassures my heart.

'Faithful Saviour,
Own me in that day for Thine.'

'In that day!'—but there are days of danger yet, and they must be days of vigilance. I must strive against sin, and my watchfulness against evil must not sleep, lest after all I come short at the last, and the kingdom that has no end, for whose coming I have so often prayed, be not for me.

How shall we be delivered from the power of the body of this death? It may become, and if all is to be well with us it must become, a body of life, even the temple of the Holy Ghost; therefore, and thereby, will we glorify

God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. So, happily, the kingdom of God within us now—'the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts'—may deliver us from the fear of that account on the great day of His wrath, and seal us for blissful entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

DEVOTION.

My Saviour and my Judge, grant to me, I pray Thee, that I may realise, as I approach Thy mercy seat in prayer, asking pardon for my sin and grace for Thy service, that I have one day in very deed to stand before Thy judgment throne, to render my account for the deeds done in this body, and to receive Thy award of mercy or of doom. May I live in the restraining influence of that inevitable hour, and may my dependence upon Thee be ever quickened, and my obedience to Thy commandment be

constrained, by the sense of the nearness of that summons which quick and dead alike must at once obey. Grant me Thy grace, that I may prepare to meet my Judge.

Sanctify, I beseech Thee, O my Saviour, the affections of my heart, that it may cherish no evil, but cleave increasingly to that which is good; and may my will be made conformable to Thine, that I may delight myself in the way of Thy commandments. Reveal in my experience what it is to have Christ formed in me, the hope of glory, and let me not be ashamed of my hope in 'that day.' Of my own self I can do nothing; feeble of purpose, I am feebler still in action, but Thy grace is sufficient for me. Grant me, then, that I may be able to feel and say, 'I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day.' To Thee, O Saviour, I commit my hope for time and for eternity. Amen.

'TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND DEAD.'

Day of judgment, day of glory,
Hark! the angel trumpets blow;
Ended now is earth's long story,
Human tears and joys below.
List the summons!
Every soul its doom shall know.

Unto this the world's been tending,
All its goodness, all its crime,
Hoary ages hither bending,
Bear its records from the prime.
End of all things,
Finished all the works of time.

In the Valley of Decision
How shall all those myriads stand?
Gentile, Christian, Circumcision,
'Multitudes' from every land,
When the trumpet
Thrills through all its dread command.

Self-convicted, self-accusing,
How shall I that summons hear,
If His mercy now refusing,
Wrath of the Lamb I then must bear ?
What the anguish
When I at His bar appear !

On the might of Thy salvation,
Lamb of God, my soul depends.
Leave me not through life's probation,
Wheresoe'er its path extends.
Claim me, claim me, O my Saviour,
When the world in judgment ends !

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**'I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST.'
AND I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST,
THE LORD AND GIVER OF LIFE, WHO
PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER AND
THE SON, WHO WITH THE FATHER
AND THE SON TOGETHER IS WOR-
SHIPPED AND GLORIFIED, WHO SPAKE
BY THE PROPHETS.'**—NICENE.

'I BELIEVE.' There is a welcome significance in this reaffirming of our faith, this fresh confession of our trust, in the great verities that follow. So saying, we reanimate our devotion, and re-solemnise our confession. Lest the language of the lips outrun the full intention of the heart, we call upon our soul to make fresh answer, 'for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'

And the confessions of faith which follow differ in subject from those which have gone before. They belong to ourselves, our great impending, inevitable change, and the sublime conditions of the Christian's life here and hereafter. This is the dispensation of the Spirit, and after the declaration (in the Nicene) of His nature and attributes, as of Him with whom we have to do, the clauses which follow deal chiefly with the life of the sons of God, their opportunities in time, and their hopes for eternity. Concerning all of these, we renew with invigorated faith the confession of our lips, '*I believe*' in the Holy Ghost, and '*I believe*' in the Catholic Church.

The Nicene additions are of great practical value : they define the belief, and they animate the devotion of our confession. The truths of which they remind us, are those which we are only too prone practically to ignore. The functions assigned and the worship attributed bring the soul into its true relation to the Holy Ghost in whom we believe.

*'Lord and Giver of life.'** 'Seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things.' And He *is* Lord of the life which He gives, and every breath I draw is a monition to obedience to His will, and dedication to His service. This lower life, this fleeting breath, the laws of my physical being and well-being, all admonish me as to the conditions of health and vigour in that spiritual life, which it is my great concern to maintain free from declension and safe from decay. The first necessity of my natural life is, that I may breathe freely. The air may be pure, but I must breathe it healthily. It is no other-

* The ordinary Prayer-book punctuation is here followed, but we should do well to give weight to a different reading, viz., 'The Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of life.' The divinity is more directly confessed, for 'Lord' is here Jehovah, the assertion being that of the Apostle, 'Now the Lord is that Spirit,' meaning, as the context shows, 'the Lord, the Lord God,' before whom Moses stood, upon the mount.

In the Anconate of Epiphemius, A.D. 374, the words stand 'the Lord and Giver of life,' but in the Creed of Constantinople, A.D. 381, we read, 'The Lord, the Giver of life.' See SWAINSON, pp. 86, 93.

wise with the life of the soul. I may not hope to live the Christian life, or act the Christian part, if I have not the Holy Breath, and if I do not in Him, consciously as well as unconsciously, live and move and have my being. The spiritual life, though spent in the midst of a thousand ordinances, languishes and must die, unless the Inspirer of all true devotion quicken our soul with His holy influence. I believe in the Giver of life ; and every aspiration after holiness, every inspiration of good, assures my faith, and deepens my reliance on Him as the Author and Disposer of my existence, through Whom, and in communion with Whom alone, I can live aright or love aright. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the Sons of God,' and 'because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father.'

'Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son.'
Collected from the general sense and consent of Scripture, rather than its express language, this doctrine of the procession of the Holy

Ghost from the Son as well as from the Father, has its difficulties for many minds. The *filioque* has had its part in severing churches, and in keeping them sundered still. Alas, that the dogma should divide those whom the doctrine should unite in bonds of fellowship, 'for through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.' Let us pray that it may not long be thus, but that 'all the building fitly framed together' may grow 'unto an holy temple in the Lord,' 'buildd together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.'

For the stay and comfort, for the peace and prosperity of the soul, how blessed a declaration of the consent of the Trinity is involved in this assertion. '*I* will pray the Father and *He* shall give you another Comforter.' 'When the Comforter is come whom *I* will send unto you *from* the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.' These are words which put the doctrine within reach of every heart, and He who spake them added yet these, 'I am in the Father and the

Father in me. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.' This is the Trinity indeed, and verily these Three are One. Our God is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever ; and the formula of doctrine kindles as we dwell upon the gracious words on which alone it rests, into living power, and distils its comfort into the soul. 'As it was in the beginning,' beyond all human thought or comprehension, it 'is now,' revealed to us, and better yet revealed in us, and it 'ever shall be' in the holy intercourse of heaven, in the sunshine of eternal day.

'Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified.' And indeed so saying, reverently, and with a holy joy, we do both worship and glorify Him, and the Amen of the congregation is an anthem unto God. The happy hosts of heaven can sing with clearer voice,—

'Speak ye who best can tell, Angels, for ye
Behold Him and, day without night,
Circle His throne rejoicing.'

But surely we have the greater cause. The

breath which is from Him may well glorify His Name, but the very power to praise Him is His gift. 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' And there is yet a reason. '*Who spake by the Prophets.*' The message of revelation is by the Holy Ghost, and so, for every hope of heaven, for every knowledge of my God and trust in my Saviour, for every truth enshrined in this my Creed, for every comfort and peace in believing, for all my joy, I glorify and worship the Holy Ghost 'who spake by the prophets.' If in any vital sense I do believe this Creed, if I can take the jailer's comfort, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,' it is by the Holy Ghost that I so do. Reverently and thankfully, then, would I join the blessed chorus in which the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, and if He will touch my lips and quicken my soul, I will, like the Psalmist, praise Him with my whole heart.

And yet how solemn and how solemnising

are the considerations which attend these high incentives to praise and worship. 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.' Of all Christian attainments spiritual mindedness is the highest, and yet it is the one without which all else is vain. 'To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.' If then, in any measure, and however interrupted by the things of time and sense, our affections can indeed cleave to the things of God, cleave unto God Himself, it is because 'the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.' If, stumbling and travailing here below, I have, in the midst of my earthliness, any assurance of sonship and salvation, it is because 'we have the earnest of His Spirit in our hearts.' If the glorious liberty of the sons of God has succeeded to the bondage of corruption, it is because 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we *are* the sons of God.' The experience of faith is the best Christian evidence,

and thus to believe in the Holy Ghost, is the happy orthodoxy of the sanctified soul.

DEVOTION.

O God, the Holy Ghost, it is by Thee alone that I can approach the throne of God the Father, and find the mercy seat of Christ. Thou art the Inspirer and Hearer of prayer. I cannot trace Thy workings, even in my own heart; I cannot surely distinguish between the aspirations of my own nature and the affections and desires which are of Thee, when I seek unto God. But, O Lord, Thou knowest; and in the mixed and mingled devotions of my infirmity Thou wilt hear and answer what is in harmony with Thy Divine will, and the rest wilt Thou not forgive? Lord, I will pour out my soul before Thee. I will empty it of its yearnings, and its self-upbraidings. O fill it with the assurance of Thy pardon, and the sense of Thy presence.

I will not wait for Thee, O my God, but I will wait upon Thee, pleading the promises which Thou hast given. I know they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, but except Thou, O Holy Spirit, sanctify my affections and purify my desires, I know they are not for me. I ask and have not, because I ask amiss. I wait on the Lord, and yet my strength is not renewed. O Holy Spirit, teach me to pray—make intercession with me, O my God.

Let me not grieve Thee by my contradictions, or quench Thy blessed influence by the growth of passions, or the neglect of besetting sins. May I daily and hourly remember that I have asked Thee to dwell with me, according to Thy promise. This, Thine indwelling, O Holy Spirit, is a solemn and an awful mystery. I cannot understand it, but grant, O my God, that I may find the reality of it in my life, and prove its truth by the fruits of the Spirit.

O Lord, Thou giver of life, pour out of Thy Spirit upon the churches, and illumine the darkness of the nations that know not Christ.

Hasten the coming of the kingdom, and the triumph of the Redeemer. The work is Thine, O Lord, and we are fellow-workers with Christ through Thee. O crown the work we try to do with Thy blessing; and grant us faith and patience, as well as hope and love, so to abide the day of Thy power, for the Saviour's sake. Amen.

' I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST.'

With the Father and the Son
Worshippèd and glorified,
Praises to the Three in One,
Ask affections purified.

Worthy of all worship Thou;
How unworthy, Lord, am I !
As I stand before Thee now,
Thy great Name to glorify.

I must first a suppliant be,
Prayer must plead the way for praise ;

Holy Ghost descend to me,
To Thyself my weakness raise.

I but give Thee of Thy own,
Other praise were poor indeed ;
Human thoughts and words alone
Hardly utter human need.

Help Thou, then, my imperfection ;
Fill me with Thy breath Divine ;
Hold me in Thy strong protection,
Let my life be wholly Thine.

Holy Ghost, the world lies waiting,
Still it knows not Christ the Lord ;
Hear, O hear us, supplicating
For the gifts Thou dost afford.

Prosper Thou the Gospel message,
Thou canst reach the deaf, the dumb :
Earnest in our hearts and presage
Of the glorious world to come.

**'THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE
COMMUNION OF SAINTS.'
'ONE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC
CHURCH.'—NICENE.**

FROM the confession of our belief in the triune Godhead, and the redemption of our race by the sufferings of the crucified Saviour, we pass to the consequent existence and character of that Church which He has purchased with His blood, the relations of its members to each other, and to their Divine Head. And the transition is great. It needs reflection to perceive that what is here asserted is properly a matter of faith at all. That the Church founded by our Lord Himself, comprising all who rest their faith on Him, still *is*, and to admit that He who died for the sins of the whole world could found nothing less than a 'Catholic,'

that is, a universal Church, and that this Church thus instituted, consecrated by its devotion to His high service, and sanctified by the promised and realised presence of the Holy Ghost, is itself, in its corporate life, thereby and thus far, holy—these are propositions the assent to which is rather a matter of understanding than an act of faith. But to believe in this Church as one, holy, catholic, apostolic, despite the declensions, divisions, corruptions, controversies, and apparent schisms, which have afflicted and do still afflict its peace; to believe in it to one's comfort, and to find in its safe shelter the home of one's soul while here in this world of sense and sin; to accept and appropriate the privilege of its communion; and in the face of abounding evil to realise its glorious mission and assured triumph—these are acts of faith indeed, and difficult is their exercise.

But with the words '*Communion of Saints*,' the demand upon our belief increases, fresh visions from the unseen break upon the eye of

faith, the past and the future are linked with the present, the bonds of time are broken, and we feel that a veil is taken away, for we 'are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.' This, and nothing less than this, is the Communion of Saints. Only in the consent and swelling harmony of this rapture of praise do we realise the full and deep significance of the 'Communion of Saints.' Our creed swells into an anthem of praise and glorious song, and as to him whose eyes the Lord opened, the mountain of old was seen full of horses and chariots of fire round about the prophet of God, so may we here discover that we are not alone, that the company of those about us and to whose fellowship we are admitted, is innumerable, and our mountain of Sion be revealed,


too glorious for mortal eye to gaze upon, but inspiring us, even in the faintest glimpses of its brightness, with thankfulness to Him who loved the Church from the beginning, and gave Himself for it, and will present it to Himself, glorious without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. All this, and how much more than this, has faith to feed upon, and hope to realise, when we add to the Holy Catholic Church that 'Communion of Saints' which unites the psalm of angels to the song of saints, and brings us by blissful anticipation to the city of the living God.

DEVOTION.

O Thou who art the Head of the Church, who didst redeem us by Thy death, making atonement for our transgressions, and giving us in Thyself the hope of glory, humbly and earnestly would we thank Thee for all the privileges of communion here below, for all the assurance of blessedness with Thee in Thine

everlasting kingdom. We thank Thee for the Church, for all the help of its ordinances, for all its opportunities of service, for its living union with Thee, for our own membership in the body which bears Thy blessed Name, and in the midst of which we realise Thy presence and renew our spiritual strength. Grant, O my Saviour, that sinful and disobedient as I am, I may yet by Thy grace be fitly framed into this holy temple, and may that temple more and more become holy unto the Lord. May I learn by devout study of Thy will, and desire unto the celestial pattern of Thy holy life amongst men, the lesson of personal holiness and personal responsibility to Thy Church and to Thee.

The divisions, the spots and wrinkles of Thy Church, O Lord, are many and grievous ; may I, by charity towards all who love Thee, and fidelity to Thy glorious gospel, promote, however small my measure, the unity of the body. Heal our divisions, O Lord, purify our faith and practice, draw us ever nearer to Thyself. May we love each other for Thy sake, and be jealous



only for Thy glory. We grieve Thee continually, and our witness for Thee in the world is weak and wavering. Grant us the presence of Thy Spirit that we may believe and know that this household of faith is the place where Thine honour dwelleth, and the very kingdom of Thy grace. Quicken our spiritual perceptions, so slow, so dull without Thee, and make us in the bond of the Spirit to prosper before Thee, and to desire the day when the travail of earth shall be ended, and Thou wilt present unto Thyself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. O Lord, our God, the work is Thine, and Thine alone, accomplish it for Thine elects' sake, and for the glory of Thine own Name. Amen.

'WE ARE COME UNTO MOUNT SION.'

Not alone—in song or service,
Not alone—in life or death,
Sion's children are attended,
Heaven to earth still answereth.

The Church above, the Church below are one ;
The joy in fulness there, joy here begun.

Not alone—in solemn praises
Make we music to our King ;
The Church below her voice of song upraises,
About the throne the tuned hosannas ring.
Jerusalem above, our mother, free,
Her children gathers still, ere they her glory see.

Not alone—in times of trial
Do we falter, need we fall.
Unseen ministers befriend us
Sent from Him who seeth all.
The kingdom by its King is safely kept,
He watched o'er Lazarus, who with Martha wept.

Not alone—when kneeling lowly
We remember Him who died,
Saints' communion sweet and holy,
Share we with the glorified.
The city of our God hath open gates :
Th' expectant Church her consummation waits.

'THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.'

**'I ACKNOWLEDGE ONE BAPTISM FOR
THE REMISSION OF SINS.'—NICENE.**

CLOSER and closer do the golden sentences bring us to our own state, and condition, and relationship to God in the covenant of His grace. One by one the solemn utterances have affirmed our belief in those majestic truths and sublime transactions which not only encompass our personal existence with goodness and mercy, but invest it with dignity, by showing it to be the care of the eternal and almighty God. But is all this for me? The subject narrows. The conditions of my personal appropriation of every soul-animating truth are affirmed, and the eye of faith, which has searched the heavens and traversed time and space, now turns to contemplate the soul within,

the means of grace, and the conditions of pardon. 'All have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God;' thus does the Scripture, concluding all under sin, declare us 'without Christ,' 'strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.' But 'now' in Christ we have 'redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace;' and thus is there opened to us a door of hope, and a way of escape, if we neglect not so great salvation; for this forgiveness is no more attainable by us without conditions, than it was procured for us without cost: 'We were not redeemed by corruptible things, but by the precious blood of Christ.' 'We are not our own, we are bought with a price.' Forgiveness is the condition of glory; what, then, is the condition of forgiveness? The Creed is silent, but the order in which the article of belief is placed suggests the answer, and the addition of the Nicene almost prescribes it. Who can forgive sins but God only? Yet, not after the averment of

belief in God the Father, nor after the name of Him who said unto the sick of the palsy, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,' do we declare our belief in the remission of sins, but after the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints. And the reasons are clear. By the ordinance of Christ Himself baptism is made the door of admission to the Catholic Church, through which we pass into a covenanted relation, rich with priceless promises. Of these promises the forgiveness of sins stands first. It is the ground and condition of all the rest.

Primarily, baptism, as administered by Divine authority, represents the gift of God, and confers, of His free grace, rights 'which by nature we could not have.'

But we are to remember always that baptism 'doth represent unto us our profession;' and, therefore, there are required of persons to be baptized repentance and faith.

Repentance needs and seeks that forgiveness of sins which faith embraces and appropriates.

It follows, therefore, that 'baptism for re-

mission of sins,' and 'repentance for remission of sins,' are but two aspects of the same thing—the one expressing the mind, and certifying the gift of God; the other expressing the mind, and marking the capacity to receive the gift, of those who accept the promise of God made to them in that sacrament.

When the Holy Catholic Church was being gathered together at the first, the commission of the Apostles was to preach 'repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.' And so did they preach. 'Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' 'Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.'

Seeing, then, that entrance into the Church Catholic and Apostolic rests upon that repentance on which baptism sets its seal, 'we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins,' in full recognition that by the repentance and conversion of heart which the Apostles preached, and which baptism represents, and

thereby alone, do we come into that covenant of mercy of which the Holy Catholic Church is the representative on earth, and the Communion of Saints the blissful realisation here and hereafter.

But while the order of the article relates in so important, and even essential a manner the Christian's peace and pardon to the 'baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,' thus showing that repentance is the condition of forgiveness, even as forgiveness is the condition of glory, there is more yet to be regarded in this declaration, and more than repentance is involved in the obligation it asserts. If our sins are 'blotted out' by a baptism, the efficacy of which is contingent upon repentance, and the institution of which was the divinely appointed symbol of purification and newness of life, how clearly is it laid upon us, who are redeemed by the death of Him who knew no sin, ourselves to die unto sin, 'for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, therefore we are buried with Him by

baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'

Without this conformity to Christ, this 'death unto sin, and living again unto righteousness,' little indeed to any of us can be the communion of saints, but a witness of condemnation: and holy baptism itself, pledging us to repentance, shall but upbraid us for our faithlessness, and overwhelm us with confusion when we, who have been signed with His cross, stand unforgiven before His throne.

We acknowledge, then, one baptism: not with the assent merely of the understanding, not with a passive acquiescence in a Divine and beautiful symbol, not with a blind dependence on the sign when the thing signified is wanting, but with the prayer that we may be led to dedicate life, soul, and spirit, unto Him who loved us, and has washed us from our sins in His blood. As it was with the older rite, so may we ever remember it must still be with the new. Cir-

cumcision, or baptism, availeth nothing, but a new creature. Surely there is one—and but one—baptism for the remission of sins.

DEVOTION.

O Lord, my God, hear me, I beseech Thee, for Thy mercy's sake, and let the prayer of a sinner find favour with Thee, through the mediation of Christ, our Saviour. I believe in the forgiveness of sins, and therefore would come boldly to the throne of grace. I know that in Thy sight shall no man living be justified ; but I know that there is forgiveness with Thee, and it is for pardon that I come. Thou art of too pure eyes to behold iniquity, and all my life is stained with sin, and dark with disobedience ; but look not Thou upon my guiltiness, but upon Thy Son, our Saviour, who died for our transgressions, that we might be reconciled unto Thee. Upon Him I trust, on Him alone is

all my hope. O Heavenly Father, I know that no man can come to Jesus unless Thou draw him. Thou gavest Him from the beginning for our salvation. O continue Thy mercy towards us, and constrain us still by Thy love, that we may come to Him indeed, and prove His mercy and His power.

Every step in the way of Salvation is by the constraining of Thy love, every desire after mercy is mercy even in the desire. Grant, O my Father, that I may be truly sorry for my sins. Let not my repentance need to be repented of. Help me to give evidence, and to have evidence, of the baptism of Thy Holy Spirit, in the newness of my life and the blessed assurance of Thy reconciliation. In the light of Thy countenance may I daily dwell. May I remember at what cost I was redeemed, and may the forgiveness of my sins be ever more and more the incentive of my service. When with my lips I confess Thee, and declare in the congregation that I believe in Thy forgiveness, may my heart rejoice, and my soul,

and all that is within me, give thanks unto Thee, for Christ my Saviour's sake, remembering that we have redemption through His blood. Amen.

'FORGIVENESS OF SINS.'

Forgiven ! O the gladness,
The bliss beyond compare !
What sweetness after sadness,
What comfort after care !

God's judgments hovered o'er me,
My conscience was distressed ;
Death and the grave before me,
There was no peace, no rest.

' There is a fold of safety,
Repentance is the gate ;
Faith is the simple pathway,
It is not yet too late.'

So spake the Church, my mother,
And bade me enter in;
There I should find my Saviour,
There I should lose my sin.

Did I then seek my Saviour?
My Saviour sought out me;
He saw my whole behaviour,
And would not let me be.

His was the hand that led me,
His was the love that found,
His pastures since have fed me,
His Church is guarded ground.

**'THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY,
AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING.'
'AND I LOOK FOR THE RESURRECTION
OF THE DEAD, AND THE LIFE OF THE
WORLD TO COME.'—NICENE.**

THIS is altogether an exercise of belief. The evidence is of things unseen, the substance is of things hoped for, or, as the Nicene puts it in words of comfort and expectation, looked for. Too intimately associated to be well contemplated apart, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting are as distinct in assertion as they are one in expectation and hope. Together they constitute the very climax of the Creed to every mortal man. Were the life less than this—'everlasting,' other than that—'the life of the world to come'—how little profit were there of all besides. The glorious truths rehearsed, and the firm belief avowed, would

at the best but furnish a gleam of sunshine to light my pathway to the tomb. Celestial radiance still, but not from the heaven of my own hopes. Were there no resurrection of the body, as well as immortality of the soul, how shadowy and indefinite, almost how solitary, to our present apprehensions, would that everlasting life become. The very communion of saints grows dim at the suggestion, and the vision of Christ Himself, and the glory which shall be revealed, fails of its fulness. 'The life of the world to come' is to be interpreted by the resurrection of the body, if we would comfort our souls and animate our hopes with its full assurance of faith.

Thankfully, then, as well as firmly, do we believe in the resurrection, and every turn of life's long way, every shadow of trouble and affliction, is penetrated by its radiance, and the very lips of the grave are eloquent of the happiness of heaven.

Assured by the testimony of Scripture, the profoundest instincts of our nature and the

deepest cravings of the spirit of man within him answer with full Amen, as with our mouth we declare that we look for the resurrection of the dead. Truly 'the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.'

Yet the question of apostolic times is still asked, and dying men still say, 'How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?' We cannot deplore a question so natural—almost so necessary—which elicited from the Apostle the priceless teaching given to the Corinthian Church. The contradictions of man are often the paradoxes of God. Our ideas of body are often gross, always material. We know that our frame dies daily; it withers with age, it is enfeebled by sickness, it is made loathsome by disease, even before it is stricken into decay by death, and given over to corruption in the grave. 'I loathe it, I would not live away,' is not the utterance of Job alone amongst the sons of men.

If we examine our own feelings, we shall

probably find that the anticipation of the resurrection of the body—of *this* body—is rather a comfort in the hour of mourning for others than of solace in the thought of our own dissolution. Few of us so love this 'clay cottage' as not to desire to change it for a better habitation. But the tendrils of affection have grown strong around forms we would not think that we have parted with for ever, and the hopes of recognition plead strongly within us for the reunion of the glorified spirit with the individual object of our love and communion in this lower state.

'Eternal form shall still divide,
And I shall know him when we meet.'

Happy and comforting, then, is the assurance, 'Thou sowest not that body which shall be,' for that body, frail, imperfect, dying in its every act of life, is happily dissolved, and we rejoice that it shall encompass us no more with its weakness and its wants. Thrice happy is the promise, 'God giveth it a body as it hath pleased

Him, and to every seed his own body ;' for to the pleasure of the Giver of our resurrection body we well may leave it, and the only limitation comes just where we desire it most, 'to every seed his own body.' The one assurance is as strong as the other. 'As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall bear the image of the heavenly.' Our Father meets us in our dearest desires, and graciously, out of His fulness, supplies all our need. Let the worm and corruption have their way ; that which I have committed to Him against that day is beyond their power.

'O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?'

In the feebleness of language, ever weak in spiritual definition, 'a spiritual body' seems to our sense-limited conceptions almost a contradiction ; how reassuring, then, is the emphatic declaration, 'There *is* a natural body, and there *is* a spiritual body.'

Imagination could devise, hope desire, faith

grasp, no higher thing ; yet less would fail to satisfy the earnest yearning of the awakened and living soul. How does the heart of every child of Adam, who feels himself to be the child of God, respond to the words of the Apostle, 'Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.' And this life is 'everlasting.' Could it, after all that has attended its history, and accomplished its redemption, indeed be otherwise? It is almost unthinkable. The shadow of an *end*, though cast along the ages, would reach us still, and impair the bliss of the most perfect being. Eternity is beyond our thought, but it is our assured inheritance. The Conqueror of death and the grave is our forerunner in glory. Death hath no more dominion over Him, nor over His. 'For ever with the Lord !' Our rejoicing in the resurrection is penetrated with the conviction of the life everlasting.

What perfection of bliss, what completeness of being ! We know that when God shall

appear, we shall be like Him, *for* we shall see Him as He is ! In these bodies no man could look on Him and live : 'No man hath seen God at any time.' 'Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me and live.' What an exaltation of condition, and what an inheritance of glory, are hereby assured. Truly 'the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.'

How can these things be ? There is but one answer : 'According to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.'

On the glories of the great hereafter we cannot dwell for long ; we must come back, as from a mount of vision, and tread the valleys with quiet steps, conscious the while of our great inheritance, and so 'set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth, considering we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God.'

Amen. Is there any Amen like this ? What a volume of doctrine does it affirm, what sup-

plies of blessing does it appropriate, what homage and worship does it join to render, and what peace and joy in believing does it conclude and enclose as we fold the 'Belief' within our heart, and clasp it with this clasp of love and gratitude — Amen! Amen before God! Amen before men. With all the communion of saints, Amen!

Amen in fleeting time, and Amen still in the eternal ages, the voice of the elect, acknowledging that all truth is manifested, all promises are fulfilled. Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

DEVOTION.

O God, my Saviour, Thou who didst redeem me by Thy death, and in whose resurrection from the grave is all my hope of life everlasting, grant me, I pray Thee, that I may look for the life of the world to come with confidence, with comfort, and a hope full of immortality. Help

me, O Holy Spirit, to anticipate and to prepare for that glorious life to which I am begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In the midst of the chances and changes which beset every hour of this my life of probation, may the security of that better life with Thee give strength to my spirit, and consecration to my every aim and purpose.

Enable me, O my God, to realise that the summons of death is a bidding into Thy presence, and an entrance into a life which Thou hast made blessed for ever. May I prepare for all that Thou preparest for me. Rather, O Lord, my God, do Thou prepare me, for I am helpless without Thee. When 'my flesh and my heart faileth,' do Thou be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Grant, O God most High, that these declarations of my belief may by Thy Holy Spirit be made to quicken my faith, to animate my devotion, and to sanctify my life. May I have love toward Thee for all which Thou givest me to believe concerning Thyself and Thy care for Thy

children. As I believe and love, so, Thy grace assisting me, may I be and do ; and when at Thy second coming Thou callest me to exchange worlds, and to know and possess what now I feebly grasp by faith alone, grant even to me a place in that kingdom which Thou hast prepared ; admit me to the communion of saints ; give me the unutterable joy of serving Thee without sin, of beholding Thee without shame, and worshipping Thee without weariness.

I believe that the heaven of Thy presence is, indeed, fulness of joy. Let the hope of that heaven grow brighter as I draw nearer to my great change. And accept the tribute of my lips as I utter even now in my tabernacle of flesh—Blessed and praised be Thy Holy Name for ever and ever. Amen.

'THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.'

Behind the veil it's hidden,
Light comes with partial ray ;

Inquiry seems forbidden
About that glorious day.
I cannot catch its music—I cannot learn its
song ;
But I can wait its coming—I shall not wait it
long.

From fear of death delivered,
From all the curse of sin ;
From trouble and temptation,
From evil thoughts within :
This is at least revealed—this is at least secure ;
I know the promise certain, I feel that it is sure.

What is our life in *this* world,
The purest and the best ?
To know, to love, to worship :
In these the soul finds rest.
To serve, to help, to comfort—these too are
joys below ;
Lights gleaming through the shadows, smiles
amid tears of woe.

Foretastes of heaven in service,
Foretastes of heaven in song,
Short glimpses of the glory
Which to that life belong ;
We prove Thy loving-kindness, we love and we
believe ;
Earth would be earth no longer if more we
could receive.

I think I see the reason
Why more is not revealed ;
Why still, and for a season,
The life to come's concealed :
I could not bear that vision, my highest is but
low ;
I cannot *think* the blessedness—I then shall
surely *know*.



